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DRAFT NSC Briefing

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THE FRENCH STRIKE WAVE AND THE LANIEL GOVERNMENT

The strike wave in France poses an immediate threat to the Laniel government. Its fall under the existing labor pressure would greatly increase the likelihood of a left-center government with a program of drastic defense reductions and foreign policy revisions.

*Noted by
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Grass-roots enthusiasm for the strike wave has surprised both non-Communist labor leaders and the Communist, who are now working to exploit it. The height of workers' agitation should be reached before the end of this week. Already, however, there is a real possibility that the Assembly will be called back before the scheduled date of 12 October.

In any event, the life of the Laniel government now hangs on the extent to which the strikes have encouraged the left wing of its Popular Republican element to try again for alliance with the Socialists.

Concessions by Laniel to labor now would mean defeat for the rest of his economy program as well.

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